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DRAFT
17 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : National Intelligence Survey Program

REFERENCE : DDI Memorandum of 6 April 1973, same subject

1. This memorandum is submitted as a basis for discussion and decision affecting the National Intelligence Survey program.

BACKGROUND

2. The National Intelligence Survey program is an interagency effort conducted under the auspices of USIB and the general guidance of the NIS Committee. Contributors are DIA and six components of CIA. Editing, coordination, and processing functions are under the Director, OBGI, who also serves as Chairman of the NIS Committee. (Tab A provides details.)

3. The NIS program was set up by NSCID No. 3 in 1948 to consolidate a number of overlapping basic research activities and to fulfill a national requirement for coordinated, up-to-date, readily available, basic intelligence. Coverage was to be worldwide and detailed. The original goals were never fully achieved.

4. For years, the NIS program has been under continuing critical scrutiny. Despite the strong momentum of its original philosophical and organizational rationale, the program has changed significantly in scope, area coverage, content, emphasis, and magnitude. At its high-water mark (1959), the program included 60 detailed topical sections published separately on 100 different countries at a cost of approximately [redacted] annually. At present, all detailed sections but one are eliminated and the program is concentrated on a newly conceived and formatted General Survey published at the rate of 30 per year and the Factbook, updated twice each year, at an estimated cost in FY 1973 of [redacted] (Tab B, USIB-D-51.1/20, 19 May 1972, "Restructuring of the National Intelligence Survey (NIS) Program" and graphic, Attrition of NIS Detailed Sections.)

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5. At inception the primary aim of the NIS was to serve high-level readers concerned with the development of foreign policy and military planning and operations. Such high-level readers were not directly reached. However, the General Survey has attracted a wide and varied readership of middle and lower ranking military and civilian officials. They use it in preparing briefings and studies for the top echelons and for background, general reference, planning, area orientation, and training purposes. Private research organizations doing contract work for the U.S. Government -- such as Battelle, NUS, Westinghouse, and RAND -- also make regular use of the NIS.

6. Some general conclusions concerning the audience may be drawn from a major User Survey conducted in 1969 and from general experience. (Tab C - Summary of User Survey; Tab D - Copy of User Survey Questionnaire; Tab E - Selected List of Users)

a. The NIS publications are used more extensively in the field than in Washington because of the lack of other comprehensive sources.

b. The DoD makes the most use of the NIS.

c. The users tend to have greatest interest in those parts of the NIS not related directly to their mission; i.e., military use of political, economic, and sociological chapters and Embassy use of General Surveys on countries other than the host country.

d. Users consider the greatest advantages of the NIS to be its accuracy, comprehensiveness, and availability. Major criticisms are too little detail, the lack of an index, and the tendency of the political and economic chapters to become outdated.

e. With the detailed sections phased out and the General Survey reoriented, the specialist in search of specific data is served less well, but usefulness to the generalist is increased. There has been an increase in higher level readers.

COSTS

25X1A1a 7. Community resources charged against the NIS program have declined from [redacted] in FY 1970 to [redacted] in FY 1973.

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CIA resources charged against the program declined from [redacted] 25X1A1a in FY 1970 to [redacted] in FY 1973. (Tab F provides a further breakdown of costs.)

BASIC QUESTIONS TO RESOLVE

8. Certain basic questions arise in considering the future of the NIS.

a. Should CIA continue to support as a service of common concern a basic intelligence program that serves primarily an extensive but middle echelon readership? The program is a viable community effort and it is demonstrably useful to a wide range of readers. However, first priority of the CIA production Offices is to serve the national leadership in the White House and the NSC Staff. As available Agency resources are reduced, some intelligence production functions will have to be reduced or eliminated. In these circumstances, what priority should be assigned the NIS?

b. Is the usefulness of a coordinated interagency, or "national", basic intelligence program worth the additional management and production problems and costs to CIA? The Agency is not the main user of the NIS, yet in FY 1973 it will 25X1A1a bear [redacted] or approximately 75%, of the estimated production costs. The review, coordination, and processing problems inherent in a "national" basic intelligence program are a burden. However, improvements are being made in the production process. CIA personnel do use the NIS, and the General Survey does provide a publishing outlet for OCI and OER analysts. If the NIS were not available, each USIB agency and a number of components of CIA would feel it necessary to produce, individually and independently, whatever basic intelligence it considers essential to its mission. This would invite duplication and uneven quality and coverage. The savings, overall, might not be significant.




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OPTIONS

9. A great many options could be devised and an infinite number of variations are possible. The following are sufficiently different from one another to justify consideration. Decision to end the NIS as a "national" program, or to reduce significantly its area coverage or scope would require USIB action.

A. Leave the program as it is.

B. Abolish it with no provision for producing and disseminating basic intelligence.

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Clearly, the program cannot remain unchanged because of the pinch on DDI resources and the traditionally low priority of the program. The total cost to the DDI -- [redacted] and 121 people or (excluding contracts) estimated for FY 1973 -- is substantial.

On the other hand, total abolishment is unrealistic. Basic intelligence in some form of availability is essential to all members of the intelligence community. If the existing central community structure for producing, publishing, and disseminating it were dismantled, departmental products to fill the gap would proliferate. Any savings in total resources (either community or CIA) would depend on the scope of the various individual follow-on programs, the nature of their publications, and extent of dissemination.

C. Continue the NIS program on its present organizational and operational basis, but streamline production procedures and reduce the scope and extent of the program.

Arrangements for further streamlining production procedures are under way. The present bound-by-chapter format provides new flexibility in coordination and processing.

The scope and extent of the program could be reduced to various levels, with accompanying reductions in costs. For example:

(1) Limit General Survey coverage to about 75-80 countries (rather than the present 124) produced at a rate of 20 per year. The Science and the Intelligence



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and Security chapters would be dropped. Establish a 2-3 year maintenance cycle for a high priority group of 20-22 countries and maintain the remainder on 3-4 year cycles. (Present average maintenance overall is 2 1/2 years and annual production is 30 per year.) Factbook would remain, updated semiannually. DDI resource requirements would be approximately [redacted] 84 MY. Printing costs would be approximately [redacted] ~~33 MY~~. (Tab G indicates methodology for cost and MY estimates.)

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(2) The program could be further reduced to General Survey coverage of 40 high priority countries, produced at a rate of 10 per year, and coverage by Country Profile only of an additional 35 or 40 countries produced at the same rate. In this case, DDI costs would be approximately [redacted] ~~70 MY~~. Printing costs would be correspondingly lower, about [redacted]

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These options provide significant savings in money and manpower and would free some OCI and OER assets for higher priority missions. The NIS mechanism would remain intact and the program would continue to provide coordinated, basic intelligence on the higher priority countries and some coverage on countries of lower priority. The Factbook would continue to provide minimum essential information on a worldwide basis.

On the other hand, the Agency would still be tied to considerable extent to community considerations in production procedures and scheduling. Coordination would still consume time and effort. The general management function, exercised by OBGI, would still face the problem of running a complex and diverse program without control of the production resources.



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D. Make greater use of external contractors for basic intelligence production

At present, The Society and the Science chapters and part of the Telecommunications section are produced by contractors. The experience has been favorable. The Economy and the Government & Politics chapters could also be done under contract, freeing OCI and OER of NIS production. OCI and OER would review the drafts. The usefulness of the resulting product would depend to considerable extent on the contractors' access to classified information. An unclassified NIS would be of very limited value because it could not be frank or critical or go beyond generalized descriptions.

The Government & Politics chapters could be returned to INR, Department of State under contract or be turned over to an outside contractor. The Economy could be produced by expansion of a small contract group in the Department of Commerce which already does some work on the NIS.

Assuming a program of the scope envisaged in Option C(1) the approximate costs would be as follows:

25X1A1a [redacted]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DDI/OBGI (NIS) | or | 40 MY | 25X1A1a [redacted] |
| DDI/Contractors | or | 40 MY | |
| PSD | | | |

E. Centralize research, analysis, and processing of all CIA-produced NIS chapters in a single Office

OBGI, for example, could be provided the resources and authority to produce all non-DIA-produced chapters. The Society would continue to be done under contract by the Department of Commerce. The chapters would still be coordinated within CIA and the community.

This would free OCI and OER of the burden of NIS production and would place all CIA production under a single management control. Improvements in meeting schedules, coordination, and quality control should result. On the other hand, OBGI would overlap some of OCI and



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OER's research and analysis functions. Under this option, savings in money and manpower would be minor. Estimated cost to the Agency of such a program at the level of production envisaged in Option C(1) would be as follows:

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| | | MY |
|---|---|---|
| DDI/OBGI (NIS) | [redacted] | or 60 |
| DDI/Contractor | | or 13 1/3 |
| PSD | | |

F. Abolish the NIS as an interagency, coordinated, "national" program, leaving each USIB agency to maintain the basic data it feels essential to its mission.

CIA would develop a new basic intelligence product covering political, economic, sociological, and geographic areas as a function of common concern and for the general consumer. OBGI would convert the mechanism it now has for managing and processing the NIS to managing and processing CIA basic intelligence production. The OCI Country Handbook would be abolished. The Society chapter would continue to be produced under contract to the Department of Commerce. The approximate costs of such a program at the level or scope envisaged in Option C(1) would be as follows:

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| | | MY |
|---|---|---|
| DDI (OBGI, OCI, OER) | [redacted] | or 55 |
| DDI/Contractor | | or 13 1/3 |
| PSD | | |

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# NIS PARTICIPATION

| Agency | Activity | NIS Topic |
|---|---|---|
| DIA * | contribution | Trans. & Telecom.<br>Military Geography<br>Armed Forces |
| | input | The Economy |
| Army | input | Science |
| Navy | contribution | Oceanography |
| | input | Trans. & Telecom.<br>Science |
| Air Force | input | Trans. & Telecom.<br>Science |
| State | desk & field review | The Society<br>Govt. & Politics<br>The Economy<br>Science |
| CIA | | |
| OCI * | contribution | Govt. & Politics |
| OER * | contribution | The Economy |
| OSI | contribution | Science |
| DDO * | contribution | Intell. & Security |
| OBGI * | contribution | Country Profile |
| Contract 25X1A5a1 | | |
| OSI [redacted] | input | Science |
| OBGI - Commerce | | |
| Bur. Ec. Analysis * | contribution | The Society |
| Domestic & Internatl. Business Admin. | review | The Economy |
| | input | Country Profile |

* Contribute to Factbook

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